



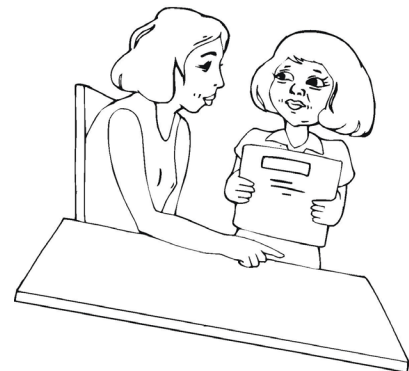
How Can We Decrease Childhood Overweight in Utah?

In 2006 the Utah Department of Health published a blueprint describing how to address childhood overweight in Utah. The below goal and objectives are from that document. The document is available at <http://www.health.utah.gov/obesity/docs/obesityblueprint.pdf>.

GOAL: Utah's schools will assume an active role in addressing childhood overweight.

Objective 1: Increase the number of schools that have policies and an environment that encourage regular physical activity.

- Participate in the Gold Medal Schools Program.
- Promote walking and/or biking to and from school for children and adolescents.
- Provide access to intramural sports programs and other physical activity clubs and programs.
- Employ certified physical education (PE) specialists.
- Adopt physical education requirements for all grades.



Objective 2: Increase access to and selection of healthy foods in schools.

- Monitor school menus and food preparation techniques to assure that foods offered in addition to the standard lunch meal, such as a la carte items, meet healthful requirements.
- Create a positive and appealing environment for meals.
- Link classroom and nutrition education lessons to food service activities.
- Increase participation in school breakfast and lunch programs.
- Educate school administrators and PTAs about nutritional standards for competitive foods in schools.
- Encourage adoption of nutritional standards for competitive foods and beverages established by Action for Healthy Kids.
- Encourage the PTAs and parents to provide nutritious foods for all extracurricular activities, such as athletics.

Objective 3: Increase the number of elementary school teachers that teach the Utah nutrition core curriculum.

- Identify barriers to teaching the core curriculum.

Objective 4: Increase the number of secondary health teachers that teach nutrition application and behavioral skills as opposed to didactic information.

- Adopt and use the State Office of Education's life time physical activity curriculum.
- Add specific life skill lessons to the health curriculum.

Objective 5: Decrease the number of activities and fundraisers focusing on food at events.

- Encourage the PTAs, student groups, and clubs to choose activities and fundraisers that do not focus on food.
 - Encourage parents and teachers to limit foods used in the classroom for rewards and parties.
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Examples of Success

Gold Medal School Program: This program encourages Utah elementary schools to promote regular physical activity, good nutrition, tobacco/drug prevention, and safe routes to school. In 2001 when the program started, 34 elementary schools participated; in 2006 a total of 265 elementary schools participated. Currently just more than half of all Utah elementary schools participate in the Gold Medal Schools Program.

Bountiful High School Received \$1000 to Fight Teen Obesity: Bountiful High School was one of 50 schools nationwide to receive a first prize award of \$1000 from the “2005: got milk? Healthy Schools Challenge Contest” which was jointly cosponsored by the “got milk?” campaign and the National Basketball Association.

Wasatch School District Established a Nutrition Policy: In July 2004, the Wasatch School District became the first Utah district to establish a nutrition policy limiting sweets and junk food. There is a ban on vending machines in elementary and middle school and there is a plan to offer fewer processed foods and more fruits, vegetables, and low-fat and low-sugar items.

Nebo School District “De-Junked” Their School Vending Machines: In December 2004, the Nebo School District unanimously passed a policy requiring all middle and high school vending machines to offer at least 50 percent healthy snacks or drinks.

In 2006, the Cache County and Alpine School Districts were awarded Carol M. White Physical Education (PEP) Grants which are intended to provide funds to local educational agencies and community-based organizations to initiate, expand, and improve physical education programs (including after school programs) for students in one or more grades from kindergarten through 12 in order to make progress toward meeting State standards for physical education by providing funding for equipment, support, and the training and education of teachers and staff. The Cache County School District was awarded \$389,658 and the Alpine School District was awarded \$452,061.

Resources:

Gold Medal Schools. <http://www.hearthighway.org/gms/index.html>. Contact Sarah Rigby at 801-538-9454 or srigby@utah.gov.

Action for Healthy Kids. <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org>. Contact Julie Metos at 801-587-3024 or julie.metos@hsc.utah.edu.

Utah State Office of Education. Contact Frank Wojtech at 801-538-7732 or frank.wojtech@schools.utah.gov.

American Beverage Association & American Heart Association/Clinton Alliance. <http://americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3030527>.

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Adolescent and School Health. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/>.

National Association of State Board of Education. <http://nasbe.org/healthy-schools/>.
School Nutrition Association Local Wellness Policy Recommendations. <http://www.schoolnutrition.org/index.aspx?id=1075>.
